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ABSTRACT

This paper removes one of the major drawbacks to understanding change by offering a definition of organizational change which specifies the system levels that are subject to change and explains the nature of the relationship between these various levels and the overall goals of the organization. Two strategies for studying organizational change processes are presented and compared: the author discusses the popular human relations strategy, pointing out its strengths and weaknesses, and then proposes a new strategy, which uses political systems analysis. A chart sets forth the distinctive features of the two strategies. A 21-item bibliography is included. (Author)

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THE ANALYSIS OF ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE: A HUMAN RELATIONS STRATEGY VERSUS A POLITICAL SYSTEMS STRATEGY

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Introductory Statement

The Center is concerned with the shortcomings of teaching in American schools: the ineffectiveness of many American teachers in promoting achievement of higher cognitive objectives, in engaging their students in the tasks of school learning, and, especially, in serving the needs of students from low-income areas. Of equal concern is the inadequacy of American schools as environments fostering the teachers' own motivations, skills, and professionalism.

The Center employs the resources of the behavioral sciences--theoretical and methodological--in seeking and applying knowledge basic to achievement of its objectives. Analysis of the Center's problem area has resulted in three programs: Heuristic Teaching, Teaching Students from Low-Income Areas, and the Environment for Teaching. Drawing primarily upon psychology and sociology, and also upon economics, political science, and anthropology, the Center has formulated integrated programs of research, development, demonstration, and dissemination in these three areas. In the Heuristic Teaching program, the strategy is to develop a model teacher training system integrating components that dependably enhance teaching skill. In the program on Teaching Students from Low-Income Areas, the strategy is to develop materials and procedures for engaging and motivating such students and their teachers. In the program on Environment for Teaching, the strategy is to develop patterns of school organization and teacher evaluation that will help teachers function more professionally, at higher levels of morale and commitment.

How change in organizations is brought about is the topic under study by the project entitled Organizational Change: A Political Analysis of Educational Policy Formation, which is part of the Environment for Teaching program. The report that follows compares two ways of studying organizational change, the human relations and the political systems approaches.

Contents

Abstract vii

What Is Meant by "Organizational Change"? 2

A Framework for Comparison 3

The Human Relations Approach to Organizational Change 4

A Political Systems Approach to Organizational Change 12

A Comment on Leadership Training for Changing Organizations . . 16

A Comparative Chart 19

References 21

Abstract

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THE ANALYSIS OF ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE: A HUMAN RELATIONS STRATEGY VERSUS A POLITICAL SYSTEMS STRATEGY

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Recently there has been much discussion about the failure of organization theorists to study dynamic change processes, i.e., the transformations of major organizational characteristics over time (Katz and Kahn, 1966). Although organization theorists have amassed a great deal of theoretical and empirical information about the structures and routine activities of organizations, they have failed to study large-scale changes, goal transformations, and the growth and death of formal organizations. There are several reasons for this failure. First, traditional organization theorists have depended on structural/functional modes of analysis--an approach that severely limits the study of change because it looks for system stability. Second, they typically have limited their research to the internal aspects of organizations, ignoring the extensive changes that environmental pressures can cause. Third, they have seldom analyzed the conflict processes that generate much of the change in organizations. Fourth, they have chosen to focus their attention on micro-level phenomena (psychological attitudes, morale, and peer group interactions) to the exclusion of macro-level system attributes. Finally, the search for technical rationality (i.e., efficiency in achieving predetermined goals) has overshadowed the study of open goals and the conflict that comes from struggles among interest groups.

The neglect of organizational change processes has been a continuing concern among some theorists. One ongoing project of the Stanford Center for Research and Development in Teaching has been a study of the dynamics of change in universities and colleges, in which an effort is being made to avoid these pitfalls. The project has been analyzing change processes in a number of field studies. A series of papers has resulted, some of which report on empirical results (Baldridge, 1970, and Baldridge, 1971a), and some, such as this paper, on theoretical

issues (also see Baldridge, 1971b). The specific purpose of this paper is to compare two approaches to the study of organizational change--the traditional human relations approach and a proposed political systems approach.

What Is Meant by "Organizational Change"?

Before comparing the "human relations" and "political systems" paradigms, it is important to establish the meaning of the term "organizational change." Are we studying change in attitudes, i.e., of individual members of an organization? Are we studying change in the technological framework within which goods and services are produced? Are we studying change in authority systems and their relationships to informal groups? Are we studying change in the relationship between organizations and their environment?

To avoid this ambiguity, let us be specific about the meaning of "organizational change" as it is to be used in this paper. First, we shall consider change that comes about through deliberate, planned attempts at innovation. Much change within an organization is not planned, but grows out of the informal activities of interest groups, or results from unintentional expansion, and environmental pressures. In the modern, complex organization, however, planning and deliberate action increasingly have become the basis for change and improvement--witness the growth of long-range planning units within complex organizations.

Second, we shall focus on improvement in goal achievement. It is a fundamental thesis of organization theory that complex systems are set up for the achievement of human goals, values, and purposes. This emphasis on improving the organization's achievement of its goals is obvious, and would be unnecessary to mention, except that most of the so-called change literature in organization theory has actually not concentrated on helping the organization to achieve its goals, but instead has focused on the minute internal processes of the organization itself. In fact, the major school that has concerned itself with organizational change, the "human relations" school, has actually focused on the

psychological needs of individuals and the interrelationships among peer groups rather than on the achievement of large organizational goals.

Third, we shall consider the change processes that affect different levels within the organization. In other words we cannot discuss change until we are prepared to discuss change in what? Stanley Udy, Jr. (1965, p. 688), has offered an excellent taxonomy of the five subsystems in an organization: (a) the technology that the organization uses, (b) the individuals within the organization and their attitudes, (c) the group processes, (d) the administrative structure, and (e) the relationship between the organization and its environment. This is a very helpful set of distinctions, and it will always be profitable to specify what kind of change is taking place in which of these subsystems.

Finally, we shall consider the strategies used to bring change about. Certain strategies seem more applicable to some subsystems than to others and to some kinds of change rather than others. For example, persuasion and interpersonal competency techniques may promote change on the individual level; T-group strategy and group dynamics on the group level; and systems analysis and macro-evaluation on the administrative level. It is extremely costly as well as ineffective to use a strategy that is not appropriate either to the desired goal or to the subsystem where the change is to occur.

Thus, from among the many possible types of change that could be studied, this paper will deal with deliberate system change aimed at direct goal achievement. In the process it will specify the subsystem levels that are affected and will distinguish strategies for promoting change from the consequences of the change. Let us now turn to a framework for comparing the two strategies that have dealt with this kind of change.

A Framework for Comparison

Before comparing the human relations and political systems approaches to organizational change, it will be useful to raise some questions that can be asked of each approach:

1. What is the intellectual heritage of the approach, and from what behavioral science discipline does it draw its research?
2. Which organizational subsystems are studied?
3. How is the distinction between technical means and goals handled? Which are the prime concern?
4. How is an organization's relationship to the environment dealt with? What are the consequences for the analysis of organizational change?
5. What kind of leadership image is proposed?
6. What strategies for training leaders are proposed?
7. How effective and long lasting are the changes that are introduced?

The Human Relations Approach to Organizational Change

One of the primary concerns of the human relations school has always been the changes in organizations produced largely unintentionally by human interactions. This approach has a long, rich heritage beginning with the pioneering work of Elton Mayo (1933) and the Harvard Business School investigations at the Western Electric Plant. Later picked up by Roethlisberger and Dickson (1939), this approach rapidly became one of the dominant modes of organizational analysis. Kurt Lewin (1951) and his followers expanded the study of peer group interactions to analyze their effect on organizations. Now a whole generation of organization theorists has been nurtured in this approach to theoretical analysis. Chris Argyris (1962, 1964), Warren Bennis (1966), Rensis Likert (1961), and D. M. McGregor (1960) are the current leaders among those who are attempting to interpret organizational change from a human relations standpoint.

The human relations approach is essentially a psychological and social-psychological attempt to explain organizational behavior. It focuses on the individual and on peer group relationships, rarely touching on features of the larger system. According to Udy's taxonomy of organizational subsystems, this approach largely deals with individuals and groups, ignoring technology, administration, and environment.

The human relations analysts, most of whom were trained as psychologists, are concerned about how organizations can be changed so that the needs of individuals can be met. For example, Argyris (1964) suggests that everyone has a need for "psychological success" and that organizations as presently structured hinder people's satisfaction of this need. He further argues that every individual has a need for "self-actualization"; and other human relations writers suggest that often the organization stands between the individual and this goal. The human relations approach, then, analyzes the negative effects that bureaucracies have on individuals, and offers strategies for overcoming them.

Unfortunately, one finds very few thoroughgoing analyses of bureaucratic systems or administrative structures in the literature that has been produced. Instead, one generally finds unsupported statements about the alleged bad consequences that bureaucracies have for individuals. For example, Bennis (1966, pp. 185-86) suggests that:

1. The formal organizational chart only rarely, if ever, resembles the power structure.
2. Bureaucratic theory and practice do not possess adequate means for resolving conflict between ranks and between functional groups.
3. Bureaucracy has no adequate judicial process to protect its incumbents.
4. The control and authority systems in bureaucracies do not work.
5. Bureaucracy cannot assimilate ...new technology or new professionals entering the organization.
6. Bureaucracy does not adequately account or allow for personal growth for mature personalities.
7. Bureaucracy seems unable to cope with rapid, unprogrammed changes.

Unfortunately Bennis does not offer evidence for these comments. In effect, he uses "bureaucracy" as a straw man in order to emphasize the needs of individuals. Other writers in this school make similar criticisms to justify their argument that bureaucracies crush individuals and that change must be directed toward protecting individuals from them.

The Goals of the Human Relations Approach to Change

There is no single human relations approach; rather there are numerous strands dealing with somewhat different problems. Yet all are concerned with protecting personal values, solving problems of interpersonal relations, reducing tensions between groups, and developing better methods of resolving conflicts. It is frequently argued that solving the problems of the members of an organization will raise the members' morale and that consequently their productivity will be positively affected. Although the supporting evidence is slim and often contradictory, this argument--which has been called "cow psychology" (contented cows give more milk)--remains one of the major arguments of the school.

Bennis (1966) names some additional goals, among them improving the ability of managers to handle problems of interpersonal relations; changing values so that human factors and feelings are considered in organizations; reducing tensions between groups; and developing better methods of resolving conflicts. Another is developing so-called "organic systems." This type of organization tries to promote good relationships between groups as well as between individuals; mutual trust and confidence instead of hierarchical authority relationships; shared rather than wholly delegated responsibility; widely shared control and responsibility instead of centralized decision making; and the resolution of conflicts through problem solving rather than suppression.

It should be clear by now that the prime concern of the human relations school is the perceptions, attitudes, and behavior of individuals within organizations, and the contacts between groups. Moreover, there is a strong ideological element in this concern, since democracy is regarded as the cure-all for the ills of organizations. The prime values held by adherents of this approach seem to be "psychological success," the reduction of conflict, the integration of the needs of individuals with the needs of the organization, and an emphasis on "human" values rather than on organizational ones.

Strategies of the Human Relations Approach to Change

Turning from the human relations goals, let us now examine some of the strategies that are used to bring about changes within an organization. It is not surprising that the human relations strategies for change are directed primarily toward individuals and groups and rarely toward structural features of the organization such as the administration, the evaluation networks, the technology, or the relationship between the organization and its environment. Let us briefly examine several of the strategies that adherents of this approach use to achieve their goals.

One is "sensitivity training," or the use of T-groups. This is an attempt to change individual and interpersonal behavior through unstructured group processes. The technique is now well established, and the use of T-groups has become so widespread that training institutes have been established throughout the country (one example is the famous National Training Laboratories at Bethel, Maine). Kurt Lewin and L. P. Bradford were leaders in the use of small group techniques for interpersonal training. Bennis (1966, p. 129) sums up the T-group strategy as follows:

> The training process relies primarily and almost exclusively on the behavior experienced by the participants; i.e., the group itself becomes the focus of inquiry. Conditions are promoted whereby group members, by examining data generated by themselves, attempt to understand the dynamics of group behavior, e.g., decision processes, leadership and influence processes, norms, roles, communication distortions, and effects of authority on a number of behavioral patterns, personality, and coping mechanisms, etc. In short, the participants learn to analyze and become more sensitive to the processes of human interaction and acquire concepts to order and control these phenomena.

Sometimes the members are drawn from a single organization, and sometimes from many. Regardless of the composition of the group, the goal is to focus on the interpersonal relationships within it and then use the insights gained therein to change the home organization.

A second human relations strategy for promoting change is on-site consulting. The Tavistock Institute in England pioneered the effort to bring psychological and sociological information directly to bear

on change processes in an organization. Members of the Institute would go to a troubled organization and examine the interpersonal relationships in order to suggest changes that might help. The difference between this and using T-groups is that the Tavistock people would approach a "natural" system and examine the way it functioned. Their solutions to interpersonal conflicts usually involved changes in managerial attitudes and in the relations between peer groups. The work of Cyril Sofer (1961), Elliot Jaques (1951), and A. K. Rice (1963) exemplifies the Tavistock Institute's style of analysis. Chris Argyris's work is an outstanding example of the consultant's approach in the United States. In each case the consultant attempts to go behind the overt symptoms and search for the social reality blocking effective communication and effective interpersonal relationships.

A third strategy is information feedback, as exemplified in the research of Floyd Mann and L. R. Hoffman (1960). The information gained in on-site research is used for promoting change in group processes. Much work of this kind has been done by the Institute for Social Research at the University of Michigan. The basic attempt here is to gather information about the attitudes of the people working within an organization, to feed the data back to both management and workers, and then to use that information to structure interpersonal relationships more effectively.

Other strategies used by the human relations school include peer group dynamics, counseling procedures, and group therapy. Taken together, they are essentially designed to change individual attitudes and intergroup relationships in the hope that a change at these levels will in the long run affect large, macro-level factors, such as decision-making systems and evaluation processes.

Evaluation of the Human Relations Change Analysis

Without question the human relations strategy is one of the most popular methods for analyzing and promoting change in organizations. Its contributions are many and valuable. For instance, its emphasis on changing the attitudes of individuals is a healthy one, and its insistence on getting human values recognized within the bureaucratic structure

is unquestionably a positive feature. The introduction of democratic ideals into hierarchically organized systems is a major attempt to restructure the value priorities of the organization. The use of sensitivity training groups and on-site consultant roles has often generated significant change in the atmosphere of organizations and the morale of its members. All in all the human relations school has given us a vision of a more democratic, more sensitive, and more humane organization.

But in addition to its many contributions, there are a number of serious problems. The series of steps from changing individual attitudes to changing intergroup relationships, and finally to changing the whole organization--each step being the logical consequence of the one before it--is problematic. Katz and Kahn (1966, pp. 391-92) make a telling comment about the weaknesses in this logic:

> In short, to approach institutional change solely in individual terms involves an impressive and discouraging series of assumptions--assumptions which are too often left implicit. They include, at the very least: the assumption that the individual can be provided with new insight and knowledge; that these will produce some significant alteration in his motivational pattern; that these insights and motivations will be retained even when the individual leaves the protected situations in which they are learned and returns to his accustomed role in the organization; that he will be able to adapt his new knowledge to that real-life situation; that he will be able to persuade his co-workers to accept the changes in his behavior which he now desires; and that he will also be able to persuade them to make complimentary changes in their own expectations and behavior. The weaknesses in this chain become apparent as soon as its many links are enumerated. The initial diagnosis may be wrong; that is, the inappropriate behavior may not result from lack of individual insight or any other psychological shortcoming. Even if the initial diagnosis is correct, however, the individual approach to organizational change characteristically disregards the long and difficult linkage just described. This disregard we have called the psychological fallacy.

Katz and Kahn are arguing that this approach usually will not work, and that structural or system-level features need to be considered. This does not mean that changing individual attitudes or intergroup relationships is unimportant: it simply suggests that if one's goal is actually to work some basic transformation of the organization, then the individualistic strategy has serious weaknesses. For anyone

concerned about the larger processes by which organizations meet their goals and carry out important functions in society, the small-scale, individualistic changes produced by the human relations strategies are not enough to improve an organization's activities significantly or to affect major system processes such as administration, evaluation, and coordination.

The second problem with the human relations approach is that it tends to ignore the problem of conflict. The typical human relations reaction to conflict is to define it as illegitimate and symptomatic of a sickness in interpersonal relationships, overlooking the fact that many conflicts are not caused by blocks in communication or failures of interpersonal relations, but stem for scarce resources, divergent values, and different goals. Real conflict cannot be communicated away, nor can it be prevented by sensitivity training. Of course, effective communication is important, and where communication is the real block, sensitivity training may be useful. But in many cases, communication is perfectly clear, and the real problem is one of genuine conflict, genuinely scarce resources, and genuine differences of opinion about goals. By not giving sufficient attention to the problem of conflict, the human relations school overlooks many of the critical problems in organization theory.

Third, the human relations school does not seriously consider the problems of formal systems and formal bureaucracies. Instead, its proponents set up a bureaucratic straw man and proceed systematically to knock him down. They argue simplistically that a bureaucracy is unchanging, rigid, hierarchical, generally ineffective, and a villain that interferes with interpersonal relationships and the achievement of individual psychological success. But they have offered no serious analysis of the formal structure of organizations and its relationship to psychological processes. Rather, they have used the concept of bureaucracy in a naive and polemical manner, much as in the popular derogatory use of the term, and in this simplistic fashion have shirked their responsibility to study formal systems.

Fourth, the cost of applying the human relations strategy to an organization is extremely high. The most effective, least expensive strategy must attack those variables that are most critical at the point of change. For example, if one's goal is to change the authority system, it would seem more reasonable to attack features of the authority system itself--its rules, its regulations, its channels of communication--rather than simply to deal with individuals' attitudes, hoping that in the long run the authority system might be affected. It often seems, however, that the human relations school is proposing sensitivity training and small group processes as the universal means for promoting change, thus overlooking a multitude of others that could be used more effectively, more economically, and more directly.

Fifth, there is reason to believe that the link between high morale and productivity is not as simple as most human relations analysts suggest (see Bennis, 1966, pp. 170-71). In fact, it seems that morale is not always linked to productivity, for often high morale does not alter the level of productivity at all. Several studies (see Blake and Mouton, 1962; Blake et al., 1964) suggest that any connection between morale and productivity is extremely complicated and that the promise of human relations analysts to increase productivity by increasing morale must be regarded with some skepticism.

Finally, a major weakness of the human relations approach is that it almost entirely ignores external factors. The external world impinges on organizations at dozens of points, and change is often the result of interaction between the organization and its environment. The human relations school has largely ignored this fact, and in so doing has ignored one of the most significant impetuses for organizational change.

In conclusion, although the human relations approach to organizational change has offered a great many useful suggestions, it is, nevertheless, very limited and must be supplemented by other approaches. This is not to say that we must abandon the insights gained by the human relations school, for they are indeed significant. However, we must attempt to add additional information from other paradigms.

A Political Systems Approach to Organizational Change

My purpose here is to advocate that organizational change be studied from a system viewpoint and that the dynamics of change within organizations be treated as a political process. The theoretical formulation of a political systems approach grew out of a case study at New York University in 1967-68. Over a period of about 18 months, research was conducted on three significant changes in the university: a drastic revision of the university's admissions policies, which was coupled with an upgrading in the quality of the faculty; a student revolt that led to major changes in student personnel policies; and a reorganization of the departmental system.

Each of these events stimulated changes in the macro-system rather than in micro-level factors such as individuals or groups. Out of the research there developed first a body of theory about political processes in a complex system, and then a body of empirical data to support the theoretical propositions. The following discussion deals with the theoretical formulations.

Emphasis on the System Level of Analysis

If we shift perspectives and use the political systems framework for analyzing change processes, then a series of intellectual adjustments is necessary. The first move is to understand that a political systems approach directs attention primarily to system levels within the organization--the administrative structures and the social environment in Udy's classification. In defending their point of view, the human relationists frequently argue that too much time has been devoted to the study of formal administrative structures. This assertion simply is not true. Probably 75 percent of the organizational studies in the last 50 years have analyzed the informal and peer group systems instead of the formal administrative structure or the environment. This bias has left us with a very poor understanding of how authority structures and administrative arrangements are tied to the achievement of

organizational goals, and with remarkably little information about the formal system properties of bureaucracies or the relations between organizations and their environments. The political systems approach will redress the balance by focusing more attention on authority structures, communication channels, and evaluation patterns.

The Use of System Theory

The shift to system-level analysis requires the use of "open-systems theory." There has been a great deal written lately about systems theory and its importance for the study of organizations. Katz and Kahn (1966), in their major attempt to formulate a social psychology of organizations, have adopted systems theory as their basic framework, and in so doing have made an important theoretical breakthrough in organization studies.

Some of the tenets of systems theory can be briefly outlined as follows. (a) Structure and process are essentially the same and cannot be studied separately. (b) Exclusive focus on internal factors is too limited an approach to the study of organizations; consideration must be given to environmental factors that impinge on organizations. (c) Growth and change processes are just as critical as structure and stability. (d) Feedback between organization subsystems is a critical component of the change process; each part of the system affects others, and this dynamic interplay is a key lever for change.

In short, systems theory emphasizes the dynamic features of an organization somewhat more than the structural features, and it focuses on large-scale macro-events rather than on individuals or micro-events. It is this emphasis on dynamism and macro-systems that forms the key to a political systems approach to organizational change.

Political Processes in the Organization

Fundamental to the political systems approach is a set of assumptions about conflict, interest groups, and decision processes. Five

assumptions are central:

1. Conflict is natural, and is to be expected in a dynamic organization. Conflict is not abnormal, nor is it necessarily a symptom of a breakdown in the organization's community.
2. The organization is fragmented into many power blocs and interest groups, and it is natural that they will try to influence policy so that their values and goals are given primary consideration.
3. In all organizations small groups of political elites govern most of the major decisions. However, this does not mean that one elite group governs everything; the decisions may be divided up, with different elite groups controlling different decisions.
4. Formal authority, as prescribed by the bureaucratic system, is severely limited by the political pressure and bargaining tactics that groups can exert against authorities. Decisions are not simply bureaucratic orders, but are instead negotiated compromises among competing groups. Officials are not free simply to order decisions; instead they have to jockey between interest groups, hoping to build viable compromises among powerful blocs.
5. External interest groups have a great deal of influence over the organization, and internal groups do not have the power to make policies in a vacuum.

If these assumptions govern our approach then we will approach the study of organizational change differently. First, we will shift from the common approach of studying policy execution to the more central political process, policy formulation. When the focus is on policy execution, most of the debate and conflict about goals, values, and strategies that accompany the formulation process have already been resolved, and thus most of the dynamic aspects of change and conflict are ignored. For this reason a political systems approach will pay close attention to the processes by which the goals of organizations become policies.

A common outgrowth of the formulation of policy is conflict. Whereas the human relations school has always seen conflict as something pathological and undesirable and has been unable to deal with the enormous amount of conflict that occurs within organizations, the political systems school assumes that conflict is a natural part of goal-setting activities, and of healthy debate. From this perspective, political science is actually more helpful to a study of organizational change than either the theory of bureaucracy or a theory of interpersonal relations.

What might be some of the critical focuses if we were to apply political systems theory to organizational change processes? First, one would look at the social structure of the organization, that is, its division into interest groups that hold different values. Second, a political analysis of change would study interest articulation, that is, the process by which groups exert pressure on decision makers in order to promote their special interests. Political scientists have done a great deal of research on interest group activity in the larger society, and it seems wise to apply this research to the function of interest groups in an organization. The political scientist's concern with political processes and the sociologist's concern with social structure coincide at the point where social groups exert pressure in support of conflicting values. Third, a political interpretation of change would ask new questions about the decision-making process itself. Instead of merely focusing on formal decision theory, with its rather sterile interpretations, a political approach would ask questions about interest groups and their pressures on authorities, about political coalitions and their activities, about external pressures from the environment, and about the nonrational aspects of decision-making. Thus, change would be seen as a dynamic political process, growing out of the interaction among different interest groups within the social structure and impinging on the decision-making system of the organization. If we want to know about real change, then we must ask political questions.

External Determinants of Organizational Change

Finally, a political systems approach always examines the nature of the relationship between the organization and its environment, since much of the change within any organization comes about in response to external forces. For example, more and more universities are finding it impossible to remain insulated from the pressures of the larger society; both hostile and friendly outside groups attempt to influence and in some cases make the critical decisions about changes within them. This happens to almost all kinds of organizations; but with very few

exceptions (see Clark, 1960) the external factors have been neglected in the organizational literature. Both systems theory and political theory, however, insist on analyzing the dynamic interfaces between the organization and its environment. No study of change can possibly be adequate if it ignores this critical feature.

A Summary of the Political Systems Approach

Adherents of the political systems approach to the study of organizational change have changed their focus from the instrumental processes of the organization to its values and long-range goals. Instead of studying individuals and groups they study the larger processes of the whole system (its authority relationships, its decision-making patterns, and its relationship to the environment)--that is, they have largely given up social-psychological explanations in favor of systems theory and sociological analysis. They have introduced political theory and interest group theory into the study of interest articulation and goal achievement (using the political scientists' concepts of conflict and goal-oriented behavior as tools). And they have given up exclusive emphasis on internal features of the organization for a wider view that takes in the influence of the environment.

A Comment on Leadership Training for Changing Organizations

Contemporary industrial society is an organizational society. Millions of dollars are spent every year training people to staff the leadership positions of its organizations. It is debatable whether "leadership training" works, but our commitment to it is obviously high. Hundreds of business schools, public administration programs, schools of education, seminaries, medical schools, and military academies train leaders. Although the programs often lack coherence and are frequently criticized, there is, nevertheless, a widely held belief that they help produce men and women who are better equipped to be leaders of organizations than they would have been without the training.

The high commitment to leadership training is coupled with another fact of life: the organizations for which leaders are trained are changing so rapidly that almost any training is obsolete even before it is well fixed in the leader's mind. It is often said that nothing is stable today except change, and this is nowhere more true than in dynamic, changing organizations. The theoretical goals of the political systems approach have been described above, but unfortunately a statement of goals does not say much about how to train leaders to understand the political systems conception of organizational change. This is an extremely difficult task that requires a fundamental understanding of organization theory, systems theory, and political interpretations of interest group activities. How shall we go about this leadership-training task?

First, it must be clear what sort of leader is wanted. The goal is not to train "efficiency experts" who can squeeze the most production out of each dollar spent; it is not to train experts in small group techniques who can manipulate group processes; and it is not to generate specialists who can manipulate interpersonal relationships. All of these skills have been the focus of the human relations leadership-training efforts, and they have been extremely valuable for certain organization experiences. But the task now is to train a new breed of leaders who will focus on system-level problems and the larger goals of the organization. It seems best to call them "political statesmen," leaders who will seek to implement large-scale organizational values and goals. In a sense, this is a move from problems of internal efficiency to problems of effectiveness in reaching organizational goals and relating the organization to its environment.

For example, a political statesman in a welfare agency would be primarily concerned with achieving proper services for clients and with mobilizing human resources for society's benefit, and only secondarily with providing for the happiness and welfare of the social workers. The political statesman in the university would be primarily interested in making the academic organization responsive to its major tasks of teaching and research, and only secondarily concerned

with keeping the staff satisfied. This kind of activity contrasts sharply with the functions of the small groups expert or conflict resolver, who would keep the staff happy and conflict defused.

The techniques for training political statesmen are not clearly established, for the theoretical understanding of organizations from this framework is fairly new. However, the training of such leaders will certainly require further study of systems theory, sociology, and political science, in addition to psychology and social psychology. It is only through disciplines with a broad perspective that the nature of the whole system can be understood.

Second, it would seem that political statesmen should be trained in the techniques of wide-ranging rational planning. The political systems approach would emphasize this sort of planning and the relationship between internal plans and the environment.

Third, political statesmen should be trained in the techniques of negotiating and bargaining, since the development of political strategies and the generation or political coalitions for the support of organizational goals is a major part of a political systems approach. Thus, the skills of negotiating, forming coalitions, and bargaining would all be important for the political statesman.

It might be possible to provide these theoretical tools and technical skills in a formal training program, but it is obviously a complex issue whose comprehension requires more than two or three days in a T-group. It will probably require the restructuring of administrative programs in schools of business, schools of education, and other academic departments that emphasize administration. One aspect of such a formal training program would be the development of computer strategies capable of analyzing the large-scale changes in the organization that would result from manipulating critical systems variables. With such a simulation, our political statesmen could learn what effects changes in one system variable would have on the total system and its relationship to the environment. However, such a computer technique would not in itself deal with intergroup conflict

and political maneuvering, which is so much a part of policy-setting. In summary, the leadership-training technique that should accompany a political systems approach is exceedingly complex and necessarily theoretical. Although it is much more difficult to master than the typical human relations strategy, the long-run payoffs might be quite high if a new generation of political statesmen could change organizations in order to achieve organizations' goals.

A Comparative Chart

Figure 1 (page 20) shows some of the differences and some of the peculiar emphases of the two approaches to the study of organizational change discussed above. Although organizational change is a prime focus of both, the methods of analysis used are radically different. An understanding of their special features should show how they may be complementary and instructive about each other's limitations.

	HUMAN RELATIONS STRATEGY	POLITICAL SYSTEMS STRATEGY
1. Intellectual heritage	Small groups research Social psychology	Sociology of organizations Political theory Systems theory
2. Level of analysis	Individual attitudes Interpersonal relations	Administrative systems External relations Political processes
3. Goals or means	Emphasis on improving means (i.e. competence in dealing with fellow members of the organization)	Emphasis on attaining goals
4. External environment	Largely ignored	A major focus
5. Image of leaders	Small groups expert Interpersonal relations expert	Political statesman
6. Leadership-training techniques	T-groups On-site consultation Sensitivity training Training in social psychology	Negotiation and bargaining Rational planning Computer simulation Training in sociology and political theory
7. Fade-out of change	Higher	Lower

Fig. 1. A comparison of two approaches to organizational change

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